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ABSTRACT

Researchers and practitioners of commercial television met for three and a half days for an international seminar to examine the portrayal of the relations between children and parents in television programing, and the effects of television on the family unit. This report provides abstracts of the lectures by nine researchers and producers addressing such issues as psychology of styles in television media usage, effects of television on the family, dissemination of educational ideologies, and emotional reactions of children to television programs. In addition to the lectures, excerpts showing family scenes characteristic of television programs in each country were screened by producers from Sweden, Hungary, the USA, Japan, England, Germany, and Iran. Participants in group discussions, despite the differences in their cultural backgrounds, seemed to share some major areas of concern in programing, including (1) avoiding over-idealization and over-dramatization in programing; (2) not shattering conventional family structures, but carefully altering them; (3) showing reality with its conflicts; (4) conveying self-confidence, security, and mental stimuli to underprivileged children; and (5) conveying democracy and solidarity to the family. Some suggestions for dealing with such concerns are included. (CMV)

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Prix Jeunesse Seminar 1977

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Kinder und Eltern in unseren Fernsehprogrammen

Children and Parents in our Television Programmes

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München vom 7. bis 10. Juni 1977

Zusammenfassung

Summary

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Organisation office tel. 59002058

PROGRAMME OF THE PRIX JEUNESSE SEMINAR 1977

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 1977	09.00	OPENING OF THE SEMINAR Dr. Ernst Emrich, Secretary General of the PRIX JEUNESSE Foundation
	09.30	HOW CHILDREN AND PARENTS TREAT EACH OTHER – characteristic family scenes from the overall television output of four countries. PRESENTERS: Ingrid EDSTRÖM Head of Children's and Youth Programmes Sveriges Radio TV, SR 1, Stockholm John A. MONTGOMERY Vice-President, Educative Services Public Broadcasting Service, Washington György SANDOR Programme Director Magyar Televizió, Budapest Tomoyoshi HAGIWARA Chief Producer Nippon Hoso Kyokai, Tokyo
	12.30	Lunch
	14.00	Continuation of presentations and screenings
	16.30	Screening of a CHILDREN'SPROGRAMME to prepare the next day's subject
	about 18.00	Conclusion

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 1977	09.00	GROUP DISCUSSIONS on questions to be prepared by the afternoon's speakers
		MODERATORS
		GERMAN
		Walter A. BÜCHI Editor of Youth Programmes Fernsehen der DRS, Zürich
		Wulf OPPERMANN Scientific Assistant (Media Pedgogics) Deutsches Jugendinstitut, München
		ENGLISH
		Kalle FÜRST Producer/Director Norsk Rikskringkasting, Oslo
		Colin ROGERS Head of Script Department/Producer ATV Network Ltd., London
		FRENCH
		Pierre CORSET Institut National de l'Audiovisuel Bry-sur-Marne
	11.30	Plenary report
	12.30	ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF STYLES OF EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MEDIA USAGE Speech to be given by Professor Klaus A. SCHNEEWIND Universität München
	16.00	TELEVISION AND THE FAMILY Speech to be given by Professor George GERBNER The Annenberg School of Communication University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
	18.00	Conclusion
	18.30	Invitation of the PRIX JEUNESSE Foundation

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 1977

09.00 THAT'S THE WAY WE DO IT (MEAN IT)
Children's and parents in my programme

Four producers will present their perspective on the subject of the seminar and will show characteristic programmes on their own.

PRESENTERS:

Elmar Maria LOREY
Senior Editor, Pre-School Programmes
Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, Mainz

Mohammed NAFICY
Head of Children's and Youth Programmes
National Iranian Radio and Television,
Tehran

Bernhard GENG
Chief Editor/Deputy Head of Children's/
Youth and Sports-Programmes
Fernsehen der DDR, Berlin

Anna M. HOME
Executive Producer
Children's Programmes
British Broadcasting Corporation, London

12.30 Lunch

14.00 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

17.00 Plenary report

18.00 Conclusion

FRIDAY, JUNE 1o, 1977	o9.oo	BETWEEN THE BIASED ADDRESSER AND THE BIASED ADDRESSEE Speech to be given by Professor Zvi LAMM School of Education Hebrew University, Jerusalem
	1o.3o	PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS
		FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SCIENTIST: Prof. Dr. Hertha STURM, Universität München and Internationales Zentral-institut für das Jugend- und Bildungs-fernsehen
		FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PRODUCER: Dr. Christof SCHMID Bayerischer Rundfunk, München
	13.oo	End of PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar 1977

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CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN OUR TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar 1977

WHY was this subject selected for the PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar 1977?	Because descriptions of family situations are an important part of all television programmes; Because programmes of this kind are particularly popular among viewers; Because the organizers feel that relations between children and parents and the way they are reflected on television deserve particular interest. Because the family is of crucial significance to the child as his first venue of learning and experience.
WHAT questions will the 1977 PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar be looking into?	What messages does television convey when depicting family situation? What significance does the family context have for the developmental process of children and the development of society as a whole? What is the role of the cultural background in various countries? What position is given to, or at least claimed for, parents and children in television programmes? What are the intentions of producers in making their programmes? How are programmes influenced by the producer's personal style of education?
HOW will the subject of the 1977 PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar be treated?	By presentation of characteristic programmes; By lectures to be given by producers and scientists; By analytical discussions in working groups.
WHO can participate in the 1977 PRIX JEUNESSE Seminar?	Producers Researchers Journalists specializing on the media.

In connection with the questions and thoughts listed in the written invitation, the General Secretary of the PRIX JEUNESSE Foundation, Dr. Ernst Emrich, presented some thoughts on the programme and running order of the seminar for discussion during his opening speech:

- Television, like the family, is embedded in an existing society.

- For this reason the evaluation of the family probably depends more on the value system of the society in question than on television itself.

- People in television must become aware of the fact that, although it is a mass medium and, in a certain sense, an authority, television has de facto only a small amount of influence on society. However, this is no reason for resignation.

During the three-and-a-half-day-long seminar the following points are going to be examined:

- How much and what can be done to help children and families:

- This presupposes that the participants acknowledge impartially what the scientists and the producers (including those from other culture groups) have to offer.

- We are not here to carry out an ideological dispute about which concept is the best, whether it be politically, philosophically or religiously motivated.

- The discussions will undoubtedly centre around those children's programmes which depict the function, the functioning, the tasks and also the failings of the "family". Parallel to this, we shall be dealing with programmes of the general programme service, for children do not restrict themselves to the programmes intended for them. Television is a "family medium" - and there's no getting around it.

PRODUCERS'
PRESENTATIONS

HOW CHILDREN AND PARENTS TREAT EACH OTHER

Characteristic family scenes taken from the general television programme services of four countries

PRESENTED BY:

Ingrid EDSTRÖM, Sweden
György SANDOR, Hungary
John A. MONTGOMERY, USA
Tomoyoshi HAGIWARA, Japan

As an introduction to the seminar, four producers showed extracts from programmes made in their countries dealing with the family. John A. Montgomery of the USA and Tomoyoshi Hagiwara from Japan presented cross-sections of a week's average children's, family and adult programmes. György Sándor from Hungary presented extracts from problem-orientated programmes produced in recent years.

In like fashion, Ingrid Edström from Sweden had selected extracts which directly or indirectly dealt with problems facing children.

The seven examples were about suburbian `tristesse' and how to overcome it; about the problem of reconciling the needs of old and young people; about a just division of labour within the family; about the fight against a playground being built on, about the problems of an immigrant worker's child; about the very personal wishes, dreams, fears and ideas of children of different age groups. The formal spectrum ranged from news report to feature film, from interview to humourous educational TV programme.

Speaking for Hungarian Television, György Sándor differentiated two types of programme: programmes which are aimed directly at the family, and programmes which are about the family, which offer the family help in dealing with its problems. In the first group, the spectrum ranges from a pre-school-children's programme with finger puppets to gymnastic exercises, from animated films and underworld comedies to a TV drama about infanticide. As examples of the second group, Sándor presented programmes about the life and problems of non-employed mothers, foreign women married to Hungarian men, young people's choice of profession and some parents' excessive ambitiousness, medical check-ups for pregnant women and, finally, what happens during a birth.

In the 22 programme extracts presented by John A. Montgomery, USA, we find "intact-world" clichés alongside social criticism, rôle fixations next to the desire for emancipation, cheap entertainment along with high-level educational programmes. Montgomery arranged his presentation in chronological fashion: it begins with a film about birtn, and ends with one about the problems of growing old. In between he presented pre-school programmes, family serials, slapstick comedies, cartoons and situation comedies for children, adolescents and adults. Thematically, the range extended from a "funny"

family quarrel to the feelings of a boy whose leg has been amputated, from Einstein's Laws to the distribution of social rôles according to sex, from a runaway daughter to the problems of immigrant families. And, finally, there is the message of the serial entitled "Footsteps" which is intended to help young parents in bringing up their children: "You hold the key to your children's future as their first teacher, as their most influential guide through life. And you're not alone. All parents are taking part in this great adventure."

In certain aspects, the eight Japanese film excerpts were similar to the programmes from the USA. According to Tomoyoshi Hagiwara, great emphasis is still laid on family life in Japanese TV productions. Almost all the peak-viewing-time programmes are family programmes. Popular subjects are the generation gap and the collision of traditional culture and modern civilisation:

How do a young woman and her children react to mother-in-law moving into the newly built family house? What are the reasons for a son to become so alienated from his rich father that he is even prepared to blackmail him? How does a poor, but hardworking boy cope with the incompatible goals of supporting his family on the one hand, and completing his school education on the other?
Besides such problem-orientated programmes, there are a great number of high-audience-appeal entertainment programmes. Shows and quiz programmes with celebrities and their children and spouses are very popular. Here we have children drawing a picture of their daddy and reciting a poem about him, songs are sung, the family is shown at home. A variety show with top comedians which is on the air every Saturday evening pokes fun at modern family-life trends - such as the excessive ambitiousness of Japanese mothers in bringing up their children.

The aim of this four-part television mosaic was to make the participants aware of how manifold the selection of programmes is which is presented day in and day out on the subject of "the family", and how varied and confusing the impressions are with which children as well are confronted, inasmuch as they don't restrict themselves to programmes explicitly intended for children - and nobody has any illusions about that.

LECTURES OF THE RESEARCHERS

ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF STYLES OF EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MEDIA USAGE

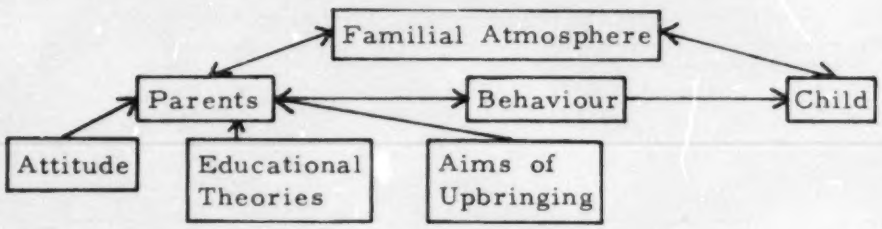
Prof. Dr. Klaus A. SCHNEEWIND
Munich University

As the basis for the lecture given by the Munich professor of psychology, Klaus Schneewind, the Bayerischer Rundfunk (Television) presented a sequel of the new "Feuerrotes Spielmobil" series, "Das Haus mit der Nummer 3o". Following the viewing, the participants filled in questionnaires in which they were asked to evaluate the atmosphere in the TV family and the behaviour of the members of the family on the basis of set criteria. When the results were analyzed, certain main points of emphasis became evident, but also quite divergent estimations.

Schneewind regards this result as a confirmation of his hypothesis that there not only are a number of styles of upbringing, but also that these styles are classified differently: Some only consider a father to be severe if he beats his children, others consider even occasional grumbling to be a sign of severity.

There is a much greater variety of familial models than is generally presumed. The simple classifications initially used in research on styles of upbringing no longer suffice in view of the numerous variables which determine the style of upbringing.

The following diagram gives an idea of the interplay of different variables which influence parents' behaviour and thus the way they bring up their children:



There is a close connection between style of upbringing, TV watching habits and the effect of television:
Empirical research has shown that the children of authoritarian parents watch television more often than others and that these children react aggressively to portrayals of violence because they have a greater disposition to aggression right from the outset.

Programmes encouraging pro-social behaviour in children only have

a positive effect if the child has already acquired pro-social attitudes through the family.

Thus the effect of television on a child is filtered through the family, its attitudes, its style of upbringing and the atmosphere prevailing within it.

Learning takes time, and that goes for pro-social behaviour, as well! And this is not the least of reasons why series have certain didactical advantages. They continue over a longer period of time, thus offering greater possibilities for identification, motivation and de-codification.

Schneewind recommends that producers should activate young viewers, encourage them to act and react. Furthermore he suggests that the pro-social elements of programmes should be identified in words as well in order to increase their effect.

According to Schneewind, role-playing is a particularly effective way of "internalizing" pro-social messages, as it allows the young viewer to mentally digest the impressions he has gained from television.

TELEVISION AND THE FAMILY

Prof. George GERBNER
The Annenberg School of Communication
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

George Gerbner had two goals in mind with his lecture. First of all, he wished to place television in its "cosmic framework", and then go into research he has carried out on the subject of "television and the family".

Gerbner considers American television to be a reincarnation of pre-industrial cultures (myths and religions). "It likewise engages man from birth to death, and it likewise excludes selection and differentiation." Whereas the power of the priests and medicine men as the sole interpreters of the world was broken by the book medium which led to a differentiated consciousness, television has, by means of its electronic omnipresence, reestablished a monopoly in the dissemination and passing on of social values. It is fundamentally different from other media because - viewed in its entirity - it comprises something of an organic, life-determining homogeneous whole. Television constitutes a kind of "pre-industrial symbolic environment".

In the same way as rituals used to be determined by religion, television now determines American culture. Television provides children with the norms with which they judge their parents. Gerbner gave an account of a survey in which (white) American children stated that they considered the Negro children depicted on television to be "more real" than the ones they played with every day. In other words, they had greater confidence in the seemingly objective cliché broadcast a million times over than in their own experience.

Whereas in the past it was the parents who told their children stories and thus passed on norms to them, it is now television that has taken over this function. However, the difference is - and this is unique in history - that it not only conveys value norms to the children, but also to the adults. In order to grasp this overall social effect, it is not sufficient to analyze individual programmes - the medium and its programmes must rather be seen as a homogeneous whole.

On the basis of this comprehensive approach, Gerbner has examined about a thousand programmes over the past ten years. Here are some of his results:

- The family is often depicted on American television, however usually in an unrealistic fashion - "soap operas", situation comedies. Children's programmes almost entirely avoid the subject of home and family. The difficult problems which might arise if this subject were treated don't fit into the commercial TV framework.

- Women are greatly underrepresented in the general programme services, their ratio to men being 1:4. The reason for this is their restriction to the role of the housewife. Television thus reflects social reality: "Women are not only in the minority as far as numbers are concerned. In relation to men they are also in a power minority!"

- This inferior position held by women is made particularly evident by the analysis of scenes of violence - women are depicted above all as victims.

- In relation to social reality as registered in the crime statistics, violence is greatly overrepresented on American television. The children's programmes are no exception to this. Violence is shown as the most effective application of power.

American children who watch television more than four hours a day acquire a differentiated sense of fear and danger. Fear and suspicion are much greater than is statistically justified. No wonder, then, that the children adapt their behaviour accordingly.

Gerbner concludes from his studies that children - but also adults - who watch a great deal of television have more conventional attitudes, more firmly established stereotypes and narrower concepts (including those relating to the family) than do those who do not watch TV much. Thus daily TV viewing habits have already almost become a social category like sex, school education or profession.

Gerbner considers programmes critical of the medium and media education to be imperative.

BETWEEN THE BIASED ADDRESSER AND THE BIASED ADDRESSEE

Prof. Zvi LAMM
School of Education
Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Zvi Lamm critically examined the education ideologies and their dissemination by television. According to him, ideologies come into being in the gap between knowledge and ignorance; more specifically, whenever opinions are passed off as truths in the social or political field. These fields are characterized by a lack of clarity and unambiguity; but as people prefer to adhere to fixed dogmas than to uncertainties, they are particularly susceptible to ideologies. Lamm subdivides the education ideologies into three groups:

1) Socialization:
Man is seen as an agglomeration of social roles; the purpose of education is to fit the young person into these roles.

2) Acculturation:
This ideology views man as being the product of a civilizational process. The aim is for the child to alter its original nature by means of education and internalize cultural values.

3) Individuation:
Man is defined by his uniqueness. The aim of education is to protect him from having to pay too high a price for social adaptation.

Every message that passes through the filter of one of these education ideologies changes in accordance with that ideology. A family which is presented on television from the point of view of socialization will appear more as a combination of roles than as a combination of people. A programme of this type is aimed at achieving the imitation of normative behaviour.

In the viewpoint of acculturation, behaviour recedes into the background. What is emphasized is the active person's standard of value. The aim of these programmes is the identification of the recipient with the standards of value of the portrayed characters.

The viewpoint of indivuation, finally, is centred on the development of the personality. Films of this type want to say to the viewer: "Be yourself".

According to Lamm it would be impossible to express anything about the family without ideological colouring. But not only the programme producers are biased; the viewers also have prejudices. If both sides' preconception coincide, then the message "gets home", i.e. the addressee understands the addressor's code. If they use different codes, however, communication problems will arise. In general, people only accept an ideological message if it fits into their view of life.

Completely ideologized people know only one code. Only messages enciphered according to this code "get home" to them. These are then regarded as reality and the person or institution that passed them on is accepted as an authority. Other messages are not accepted, or their content is "falsified" in accordance with one's own code.

For example, the viewer could learn from the American series "All in the Family" that racism is justified, but he also could learn that it is ridiculous and evil. He could learn from "Kojak" that crime doesn't pay, but he could also learn that criminals merely lack the necessary intelligence to get away with it.

The aim of intellectual education should be not only to learn several codes, but also to understand that messages are encoded and that they are not identical with reality. This, however, means accepting the necessity of living with uncertain knowledge ans an incomplete view of life.

Lamm sees in television the great possibility of "inoculating people against their constant attempts to evade ambiguity and uncertainty, of warning them against their deep-rooted desire to deceive themselves and against those who wish to deceive them."

There are three paths leading to this goal:

1) Plurality:
The treatment of a subject from a number of points of view without giving one of them preference. The viewer must solve the problem himself.

2) Subversion:
By this, Lamm means enlightenment regarding style of presentation, techniques and producing conditions, the questioning of accepted values and making people aware of their own feelings.

3) Art:
This cannot be planned in advance, but it nevertheless offers the best opportunity of liberating oneself from intellectual rigidity. Television could be capable of leading more people to art.

LECTURES BY
PRODUCERS
(accompanied by showings
of characteristic programme
samples)

THIS IS HOW WE DO IT (MEAN IT): CHILDREN AND PARENTS IN MY PROGRAMME SERVICE

Elmar Maria LOREY
Executive Producer
Pre-School Programme Department
Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, Mainz

Elmar Maria Lorey's lecture and his film samples traced the development of the ZDF (Channel 2 of German Television) children's series "Die Rappelkiste" which after nearly a hundred sequels had undergone a process of re-examination and readjustment as a result of scientific attendant symptoms and the constant willingness of its producers to make changes. In the past the topics were treated from the point of view of the children; only their troubles, desires and day-to-day problems were dealt with. The reaction of the fathers and mothers watching the programmes with their children was often one of displeasure. Although they did want to bring their children up to be independent, the boys and girls on the screen struck them as being too impertinent. They wanted to have their children enlightened on such topics as love, sickness, death or divorce - but to see this done by a children's programme made them angry. The parents considered "Die Rappelkiste" to be a bothersome and discomforting competitor to their own efforts at upbringing. Pedagogic "interference" was the result.

Lorey used the film "Die Scheidung" ("The Divorce") to demonstrate the faults of the old concept. This film treats its subject one-sidedly from the children's point of view. The questions coming to adult's mind - why did it happen, who or what is to blame, what will the consequences be - are not taken into consideration. "The parents are confronted with their latent marital problems, feel personally affected, but are left on their own with this emotional burden. The children are given assistance, but the parents come away empty-handed." (Special problem: Can one prevent children from intact families from suffering from fear of divorce?)

The conclusion drawn from this experience was that: "Parents are the real problem children in children's programmes. Their emotions, needs and motivations must be taken into consideration just as those of the children are."

Lorey demonstrated the first, as yet tentative attempts in this direction using the example of a programme entitled "Streitlupe", the quiet and gradual anatomy of a conflict between a mother and her four-year-old son. There are no longer any emotional threats here; by means of the inner monologue technique, the world of emotions is confronted with the world of practical activity, and the one is explained by means of the other. The audience was justified in raising the question of whether this is not equally a film for parents as well as for children.

Mohammed NAFICY
Head of Children's and Youth Programmes
National Iranian Radio and Television,
Teheran

The speaker divided the problems dealt with on Iranian television into two categories:
The problems which arise in every country with Western civilization, and the specific problems of a developing country where tradition and modern civilization are in collision.

Mohammed Naficy presented above all films pertaining to the second category. In the first two examples the patriarchal family structure is critisized, the lack of understanding and communication between young and old. In the first case, the son refuses to follow in the comfortable footsteps of his rich father. The second film deals with the problems of a pair of lovers whose parents furiously try to bring them apart.

The sensible choice of profession is the subject of the third film:
In an amusing animated film, unscrupulous and corrupt civil servants are contrasted with the responsible life of a "useful member of society".

The last film, "Mullah and his Donkey", contrasts in fairy-tale fashion naive gullibility with sly gangster methods. Naficy's comment on this type of fairy-tale enlightenment: "We have to prepare people who have lived in an intact world for centuries for industrial society." Thus the development towards an industrial society means, among other things, not only breaking with the belief in miracles, but also with ignorance and naive trust.

Television is used very consciously as an instrument for coping with this development, for, as Naficy says, "television is an immense builder of social consciousness in a country still fighting against illiteracy."

Bernhard GENG
Deputy Head of the
Children's/Youth/Sports Department
Fernsehen der DDR, Berlin

The stylistic methods and the goals of family television in the GDR were at the centre of Bernhard Geng's lecture.

Family programmes should

- be aimed at the "normal" family, i.e. the family with two to three children and both parents working;
- be attractive, above all for children, but also for parents;
- by means of action, cheerfulness and dialogues about essential questions, promote the development of children's personality and their individuality, and stimulate them to think for themselves;
- not only impart knowledge, but also the capability for using this knowledge;
- acquaint children with the laws of nature, but also with moral concepts, give them positive answers to the questions arising out of life, help them in solving their problems without schoolmastering them.

According to Geng, the preservation of the family ranks very high in the GDR - children's upbringing is not only an individual task, but also a social, even a political one. Children's and family television programmes in the GDR have an avowedly political function.

As an example of the programmes produced by his organization, Geng showed the feature film "Geschwister" in nearly full length. The film is about the problems of children who suddenly become brothers or sisters due to their mother or father marrying. The story proceeds rapidly, repeatedly coming to a head in emotional, dramatic climaxes. In between there are moments of lingering, images that visualize feelings without words.

Anna M. HOME
Executive Producer, Children's
Programmes Department
British Broadcasting Corporation,
London

Anna Home stated in her lecture that the BBC children's programme producers have no specific pedagogic intention, no particular message which they wish to convey to the TV public. The general goal of the BBC is merely to offer children a varied, entertaining and balanced selection of programmes - soi disant a microcosm of the adult programmes.

According to Anna Home, the BBC's children's programmes reflect the complexity of social reality. In this society there are numerous types of family relationships, but there is no such thing as an "ideal" family. That is why the BBCs programmes do not presuppose a traditional family background. In "Playschool", the daily pre-school series, they don't say "Ask your mother", they say "Ask an adult".

Documentary and feature films are intended to provide children with a wide range of variety regarding contents, styles and social backgrounds. The primary goal is entertainment, excitement, action. The family situations only have a secondary relevance in these films.

There is no intact world in the examples Anna Home presented. In almost all cases, the parent-child relationship is disturbed.

In the film "Michael", a young boy fights against the world outside in order to support himself and his crippled father after his mother leaves them. "Rocky O'Rourke" is the story of a young rocker who hates his stepfather and emulates his criminal brother. In "Carrie's War", children are separated from their parents due to evacuation, and then attempt to find their way in a completely foreign environment. In "The Day I Shot My Dad", a son rebels in amusing fashion against the patronizing manner of his father who is set on winning a youth film competition for him. The only example of a normal English family Anna Home showed was the film "Lizzie Dripping". But here as well there is a scolding mother and an over-doting grandmother.

Why does the BBC produce so many films with problematic parent-child relationships? "Excessive idealization of the family", explained Anna Home, "brings many dangers with it. For no child is always happy with his parents."

Anna Home considers the producers of children's programmes to have a great responsibility:
"The temptation is great to use our programmes to spread our own gospel - even if this is not in the interest of the viewers. We must take a stand against those who think they must convey their personal point of view to the children. We must always bear in mind that our main task is to make programmes <u>for</u> children and not <u>about</u> them; programmes that give them something to think about, but above all programmes that children enjoy."

IMPORTANT FINDINGS resulting from the GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Two English-language, two German-language and one French-language study group discussed the thoughts pertaining to the seminar topic introduced by the scientists and producers and the programme samples shown during the presentations.

Two main questions emerged in the end:

- What can children's programmes provide with regard to the subject "The Family"?

- How can they provide it?

Above all in the English-language groups where seminar participants from different countries and cultures came together, the relativity of values and social norms became evident. Developing countries, for example, do not orientate themselves according to abstract concepts, but to quite pragmatic goals. Television plays a great role as a means of education in a society of illiterates - for children and adults. The task of television in the Third World is above all to mediate between tradition and progress. In Saudi-Arabia, for example, depicting a woman's hand is almost a revolutionary deed; in Kenya, divorces are not a topic of interest - this is more likely to be aroused by the question of whether a man should marry four or five women.

Despite all the differences - regarding requirements, convictions and cultural background - certain main areas of stress concerning children's programmes emerged during the course of the discussions:

Children's programmes should:

- o avoid the danger of over-idealization, but also of over-dramatization;
- o not shatter conventional family structures, but carefully alter them;
- o neither heed over-zealous progressives, nor reactionaries who close their minds to every new piece of knowledge;
- o show reality with its conflicts;
- o help children (and their parents) to cope with conflicts;
- o especially convey self-confidence, security and mental stimuli to underprivileged children;
- o not use children as tools for family reforms;

- not agitate against parents;
- help parents to understand their children better;
- include parents in the addressee group and thereby promote discussion within the family;
- convey democracy and solidarity into the family.

These tasks can be fulfilled by

- using all the forms but not the contents of adult programmes;
- "microscopic" treatment of the environment and its problems;
- breaking with the catastrophe pattern which heaps up emotions without helping to cope with them;
- the inner monologue technique which includes the parents in the proceedings and helps the children understand adults' point of view;
- depiction of the contents in the form of "stories" which can be re-lived and reconstructed in the children's minds.

In some of the study groups the question was posed whether the broadcasting corporations do not require structural change. This view held that nowadays television is a factory which hardly encourages the creativity of their colleagues. Some participants were of the opinion that perhaps children's programmes should be reduced in number, and, in return, produced better and more carefully.

There was general agreement that the producers should work more closely with the scientists - "Television without research is like a wheel without spokes."

The following special problems were acknowledged and named as such:

- there is no ideal family model;
- parents all too often use television as a babysitter, instead of selecting and watching the programmes together with their children;
- positive-model behaviour is considerably more difficult to depict than negative behaviour;
- due to the international exchange of programmes and unreflected copying of one another, there is a danger of stereotyping; this acts to suppress original effort and imagination;
- excessive demands should not be placed on television. It cannot undermine the system which supports it.
- The different legal constitutions of the television institutions in the different countries (state-run/public corporation/commercial) effect the work of the producers in different ways.
- Sensible and proper use of the television medium is something that must be learned.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SCIENTIST

Prof. Dr. Hertha STURM
Munich University / Scientific Head of the Internationales Zentralinstitut für das Jugend- und Bildungsfernsehen

The speaker picked out certain aspects from the great number of problems mentioned during the seminar, in order to draw practical conclusions from the point of view of psychology. In her own research work Hertha Sturm has examined the emotional reactions of children and youth to television programmes. She presented the results of this research and derived suggestions for children's programme producers from it:

1) Pre-school children can only follow a story if one scene is developed from another. This means the producer should not use hard cuts, rapidly changing details, flashbacks, etc.

2) Children experience adults much more vividly than adults do each other. In order that this should be expressed in films, camera angles corresponding to a child's angle of view should be used more often.

3) Children tend to gradually expan d their perceptive capacities. This is why they like short-term action on television to begin with - especially that in commercials. However, in a complicated world, children must learn to adapt themselves to long-term thinking. Television should act against its own short-term - action aspects; for example, by not producing magazine programmes with short sequences, but rather series with continually re-appearing identification figures.

4) According to Gerbner, children who watch a lot of television develop rigid stereotypes, and are insecure and fearful. Producers who know this should deliberately do without high viewer numbers. The alternative to ogling at the audience ratings would be to produce a variety of special programmes for specific viewers.

5) Cognitive knowledge is soon forgotten, but not emotional impressions. Children's programmes should therefore have a built-in safety valve for emotions - such as a figure which is not involved in the depicted conflict.

6) According to René Spitz, aggression always increases when people are concentrated in too great numbers. Now, it is conceivable that television triggers off emotional crowding in children's psyches which they don't know how to cope with. This damming up of emotions could cause fear and thus the tendency to aggression. Sturm is at present testing this hypothesis in her research work.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS
From the perspectives of the producer

Dr. Christof SCHMID
Family Programmes Department
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Christof Schmid followed up the papers given by Mr. Montgomery, Professor Gerbner, and Professor Sturm by presenting his conclusions regarding producers' practical needs and describing a general impression in that anxiety appears to be a predominant emotion in our lives- an emotion which is largely independent of the specific cultural and political background. Television, he said, participates in this basic emotion by contributing to the existing anxiety (through the totality of the overall television output, which is making it increasingly difficult for the individual to play an active and selective role) and by acting as a major tranquilizer in covering up anxiety (by adhering to conventional standards, by clearly designating good and evil, reward and punishment, by presenting absolute stereotypes, by offering non-committal outside views, etc.).

Within this paradoxical tension caused by the creation and the superficial elimination of anxiety through television, the speaker then described his search for a suitable perspective as a producer of children's programmes. He presented his task as "the necessity to move away from anxiety and towards happiness".

This, he emphasized, is possible by obtaining an insight into the sphere of a person/situation regarded as hazardous, by learning that one is not alone with one's anxiety, by experiencing oneself and establishing contacts with others, and, last but not least, by reducing and clearley circumscribing the number of programmes offered (limited number of programmes, repetitive serials, definite basic formats).

This requires first-rate, professional television also for children - television which can and must offer the full range of general programming possibilities: from reports to documentaries, from playful all the way to grotesque programmes. The programming thus obtained, said the speaker, would be more precise than existing programming, and not just a reduced output. It would concentrate on aspects accessible to children themselves through their own experience and knowhow: above all the family atmosphere. This atmosphere would be shown microscopically from the inside in children's programmes, and not macroscopically from the outside. A sufficient enlargement of details would dissolve stereotypes and turn them into individual features with unmistakable concepts and emotions, hopes and anxieties involving inherent problems, and external conflicts. Children would learn that t h e f a m i l y does not exist, not even as a yardstick for measuring one's own situation, that they are not alone with their anxieties and problems, and that there are individual possibilities of avoiding and escaping from this anxiety.